Mr. I. E. Ambooken.—The reply given is that the matter is under consideration. May I know under whose consideration, of the Government or of the Panchayat Superintendent? For the answer is given by the latter.

President—It is only sent for report, and the enquiry of this is pending.

Mr. I. E. Ambooken.—Let me know how much more delay will there be, at least, approximately?

President.—I like to avoid such questions. Rest assured that delay will be avoided, as far as it is possible.

Mr. I. E. Ambooken.—In some cases the Government is in a position to answer such questions. If a date had been fixed in the answer, it would have been all right.

The resolution passed by the Varandarappalli Panchayat.

47. Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Will the Government be pleased

(a) to lay on the table a copy of the resolution passed by the Varandarappalli Panchayat regarding a *chira* in the river in 1100, and also to state what action they have taken in the matter up till now;

(b) to state whether there was any request for the same *chira* this year, whether they accorded sanction to it and the reasons for not putting up the *chira* till now?

Mr. I. Raman Menon.—(a) Please see Appendix I for a copy of the resolution. The estimate for the work passed by the Panchayat was found to be excessive. A fresh one for a less amount was got prepared, and the work carried out through a Panchayat member.

(b) There was a request, and sanction was given to put up the *chira*. A reference was, however, made to the Panchayat whether they would undertake the construction on condition of payment after the maintenance season. This safe-guard had to be thought of as the *chira* put up in 1100 was illicitly cut open, and the local people hardly evinced any interest in getting at the culprits. No reply was received from the Panchayat till 10th Kumbham 1101 when the period for putting up the *chira* passed.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—How can the Panchayats undertake to do it? Their responsibility ceases, as soon as the construction is done according to the estimate.

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Mr. I. Raman Menon.—The responsibility does not so cease as regards the *chiras*. It ceases only after the season for which the *chira* is put up, and after the final payment is made—only after the maintenance period.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Can the Panchayat do it without the aid of the Police? How can they safe-guard it during the night without the help from the Government?

President.—Who is there to tamper with all those works?

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Last year it was said that this *chira* was illicitly cut open. How is the Panchayat responsible for the illicit opening of the *chira*?

President.—You know a good deal about *chiras*. Which is the *chira* you refer to? We want to understand things properly.

Mr. I. Raman Menon.—I found that there was some difficulty for water in the year 1099. Then I suggested that, for the use of the people as well as of the cattle, the *chira* may be put up in the Kurumali River, somewhere between Nandipulam and Muppiliam, and the *chira* was accordingly sanctioned by the Government. The *chira* was put up by the Panchayat President. In the meantime, he fell ill, and the whole work was entrusted to the senior member of the Panchayat. He put up the *chira*, and, officially, the payment was also made, and there was also an undertaking that the *chira* would be maintained till the end of the season; that is, he was to take care of the *chira* till the monsoon burst. A few days afterwards, the *chira* put up was illicitly cut open, and the member who undertook the work wrote to me about it. I made enquiries in the matter, and the matter was also referred to the local Magistrate. The local Magistrate ordered an enquiry to be made by the Police. The Police went to the spot, and they could not get any evidence. Nobody in the locality was forthcoming to give evidence, and the matter is still under enquiry. I have not been able to solve this till now. These are the facts of the case. When the question for the proposal of putting up of the *chira* came up, I asked the Panchayat whether they would undertake that the *chira* would be safe-guarded till the end of the season.

President.—Is it to maintain it till the end of the hot weather?

Mr. I. Raman Menon.—Yes, Sir. They could have very easily done so, because there would be nobody who would be taken to task in the Panchayat, and the Panchayat could very

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well take an agreement from the contractor. This definitely they refused to do. In the meantime, the season was very far advanced. This is the whole fact.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Did not the Panchayat complain to the Superintendent that the amount allotted was insufficient, that the place selected was rocky, and that the *chira* will not stand.

Mr. I. Raman Menon.—One set of people wanted to put up the *chira* somewhere near Varandarappalli close to the tea plantations. That would not serve the purpose of the villagers of Nandipulam, Muppiliam. I inspected the locality with the Village Officers, and found that the *chira* put up in 1099 was in a suitable place. The member under whose supervision the work was carried out also told me that it was the suitable place, whereby the villages of Varandarappalli and Muppiliam would be benefited. There was not the slightest reason to think that the site selected was unsuited for the putting up of the *chira*.

President.—This is only a difference of opinion. The place chosen by you was the most proper one.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—The Panchayat reported that the spot was rocky, and that the *chira* would not stand there. Still the *chira* was constructed there, and the contractor went away. He said that the *chira* was illicitly cut open, and for the illicit opening of the *chira* the people have to suffer.

President.—He says that he made enquiries in the matter. The place chosen by him was suited to the people of Nandipulam, Varandarappalli, etc., and so the *chira* was put up there. I do not think any further question can arise there.

Village Panchayats in the Cranganur Taluk.

48. **Mr. N. Padmanabha Menon.**—(1) Will the Government be pleased to state whether there are any Village Panchayats in the Cranganur Taluk;

(2) if not, will the Government be pleased to state the reasons for it;

(3) will the Government be pleased to state whether it is their intention to organise Village Panchayats in the Cranganur Taluk at an early date?

Mr. I. Raman Menon.—(1) No.

(2) The question was once considered, but was dropped for the following reasons:—

(i) There was an idea to organise a minor Municipality for Cranganur under the new Municipal Regulation.

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